Six meetings of the MIDCOM have taken place so far. The last meeting was held in New Delhi in December 2007. The meetings, *inter-alia,* focussed on issues such as training, high level visits, exchange of instructors, sharing of experience relating to disaster management and relief operations, sharing of maritime information and defence industry cooperation. These issues are constantly pursued in accordance with the MoU signed between the two Governments.

DRDO leadership in making country self-reliant

3137. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has called Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) to lead the country's self-reliance in technology development;

(b) if so, whether the country's self-reliance in technological development combined with industrial and economic progress makes Inida a true super-power in the South Asian Region;

(c) if so, what are the man proposals the DRDO is considering to have a planned and time-bound application and delivery, in fields such as hypersonic propulsion, unmanned land and underway water vehicles, etc.; and

(d) to. what extent DRDO has agreed to work for them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) A achieving self-reliance in technology development is a responsibility that has to be met through national effort by the all the Government agencies including DRDO and Private Industries.

(b) Having established country's self-reliance in key technologies and strategic systems, India is already a power to be reckoned with, in South Asian Region.

(c) and (d) DRDO is undertaking or has already undertaken project in the technology areas of hypersonic propulsion, unmanned land and under water vehicles.

Acquisition of Trenton landing Platform Dock

3138. SHRIMATISUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General has indicated the Navy for acquiring for Trenton Landing Platform Dock from the United States' Navy without a rigorous technical evaluation of the actual physical state of the ship and on-board equipment;

(b) if so, what are the other main points mentioned in the CAG report;

(c) whether Government has conducted any inquiry as to how such purchases have been made by the Forces; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken against those held responsible?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) has mainly observed in its report that the decision to purchase the Landing Platform Dock (LPD) from the USA was concluded without a proper physical assessment of the ship. The Indian Navy acquired Indian Naval Ship (INS) Jalashwa (ex-USS Trenton) after a Joint Visual Inspection of the ship undertaken by an Indian Navy delegation, led by the then Vice Chief of Naval Staff, the delegation also sailed on the ship.